

# The Circuit Writer



NEWSLETTER OF THE HISTORICAL AND ARCHIVAL  
SOCIETY ++ Northern New Jersey Conference  
United Methodist Church

Constance Brewer,  
Editor

Number 26  
Spring, 1987

## Annual Meeting

of

NORTHERN NEW JERSEY HISTORICAL & ARCHIVAL  
SOCIETY

at VERONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - Montrose and Hill St.

Saturday, May 2, 1987      Registration at 12:30 p.m.   Lunch at 1:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m. Guest Speaker - Dr. Charles Yrigoyen  
"APPRECIATING OUR HERITAGE"

Visit this historic church of our Conference. The original cornerstone was laid one hundred and fifty four years ago in 1833. It's founder was William D. Beach of West Livingston. An extension was built in 1873 and a chapel added in 1893. The present church building was dedicated in 1910.

Reservations-Lunch ~ should be received by April 20th. Call 239-5509

Our 1986 publication "Skeletons in Our Church Closets" is available for \$6.00 from either Dr. Robert Simpson 460 Main St., Chatham or The Rev. William Noll Verona U. M. Church, Montrose and Hill St. Verona, 07044.

The fascinating accounts of unusual events in the various N.N.J. Churches are delightful reading.

The 1987 publication is to be on sale by May 2nd. It is about the Ethnic traditions of Northern N. J. Methodists including Asian, Black, Native Americans, German, Italian, Scandinavian and Hispanic Americans.

Both of these excellent publications have been edited by Robert Simpson.

More good reading comes from Southern N. J. "What God Has Wrought" is the history of S. N. J. Conference by Robert Steelman. Details are in the Feb. 1987 Methodist Relay.

Local Church Histories for 1986 should be sent to Dr. Kenneth Rowe, United Methodist Archives Center, Madison N.J. 07940. The Rockaway Valley U. M.C. was the 1985 recipient of a special award for a local church history was given by the N.N.J. Historical & Archival Society.

Please Post  
Sent to Pastors-Historians 3/1987

Preliminary Announcement

September, 1986

Quadrennial Meeting

ANNUAL CONFERENCE COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY CHAIRMAN OR REPRESENTATIVE

(In Conjunction with Annual Meeting of the General Commission on Archives and History)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 - SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1987

At: Xavier Center, College of St. Elizabeth, Convent Station, NJ. and The Archives and History Center, Drew University Campus, Madison, NJ

Program will feature:

Sessions specifically on the work and concerns of the Annual Conference Commission on Archives and History.

Sharing with the General Commission at the plenary sessions of its Annual Meeting.

Tour of the Archives and History Center on the Campus at Drew, the offices of the General Commission.

Presentations by the members and staff of the General Commission on topics and issues in Annual Conference work such as policies and procedures, preservation of materials, interpretation of history, and writing histories, as well as helping local churches "do" history.

Fellowship, conversation and discussion with other leaders in preserving and disseminating United Methodist history.

Plan now to be sure your Annual Conference is represented in these sessions.

Approximate Cost:

Basic price for program, room and board (2 nights and 6 meals) \$75.00

For those who remain Sunday for afternoon tour - OR - remain for Workshop on Shrines and Landmarks (1 night and 2 meals)  
\$25.00 Additional to Above

Additional Cost for the Workshop on Shrines and Landmarks:

Registration, program, 2 additional nights and 7 more meals) \$125.00  
(Full scholarship available for ONE person representing each Shrine or Landmark designated by the General Conference)

Please plan to arrive by supper at 5:30 on Friday evening. Transportation will be provided at no cost by the Commission from and to the Newark airport for those who notify us of their arrival and departure times in advance. Please plan to depart after the noon meal on Sunday (unless you are remaining for the tour and/or Workshop on Shrines and Landmarks).

Detailed program and registration forms will be sent to Annual Conference Commission chairpersons about May 1st, 1987.

If you have questions or concerns before that time, please write: Assistant General Secretary, Commission on Archives and History, P. O. Box 127, Madison, NJ 07940.

## OBSERVING HERITAGE SUNDAY, 1987 - 1990

Heritage Sunday shall be observed on the Sunday following April 23, the date of birth of The United Methodist Church. It falls during Eastertide, the season in which we remember the Resurrection and triumph of our Lord. Heritage Sunday calls the Church to remember the past by committing itself to the continuing call of God.

- The Book of Discipline, 1984, paragraph 273.1

THEME: "CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE"

MUSIC - April 26, 1987

WORSHIP - April 24, 1988

PREACHING - April 23, 1989

WITNESSING - April 29, 1990



A STIRRING OF SPIRITUAL AWAKENING is sweeping through our denomination today. It is as yet unshaped and unfocused, but the yearning is manifested in many ways. Many United Methodists feel a call to look again at the spiritual roots from which the structures and programs of our church have grown. In seeking guidance for that spiritual renewal, we may well heed the words of Isaiah:

Hearken to me, you who pursue deliverance,  
you who seek the LORD:  
look to the rock from which you were hewn,  
and to the quarry from which you were digged. (51:1)

Perhaps we can begin to find the directions we seek by reminding ourselves of some ways in which God has worked among us in the past. That, at least, is the aim of the Heritage Sunday themes for 1987 - 1990, "CELEBRATING OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE."

Heritage Sunday has been a feature of the United Methodist year since the unification which created the denomination in 1968. Previously, The Methodist Church had a similar event in "Aldersgate Sunday." The broader scope of this celebration incorporates the Evangelical United Brethren tradition and expands the Methodist tradition to events and themes other than Aldersgate.

Since 1968, the General Commission on Archives and History has been the agency responsible for selecting the themes and promoting the observance of Heritage Sunday. In the past, the Commission has lifted up individual themes one at a time. Now, however, it wishes to remind United Methodism of our spiritual roots in a series of observances stretching over the period 1987 - 1990. It invites pastors and laity across the connection to seek out their own ways of remembering and celebrating these aspects of our past.

The celebrations focus on a common theme each year. In practice, they will vary widely according to the needs and imagination of the diverse elements of

our church. They are not intended merely to fix our minds on past glories. Rather, they call us also to seek our future paths of spiritual growth.

CELEBRATING OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE involves us in looking at some of the ways in which our forebears related to God. The themes selected to express that tradition remind us of our goodly heritage of MUSIC (1987), WORSHIP (1988), PREACHING (1989) and WITNESSING (1990).

+ + +

### CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE OF MUSIC - SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 1987



MUSIC was from the very beginning a central manifestation of the Methodist spirit. One observer said he could not decide whether it was the preaching of John Wesley or the hymns of Charles Wesley that gave the greater impetus to early Methodism. In hymns, Methodists found a poetic expression of theological truths, an expression that they could carry with them "in cot and mine and slum" to contemplate while they went about their daily tasks. In 1987, as the church works on a new hymnbook, it will be very appropriate for us to explore the music which meant so much to those who went before us.

+ + +

### CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE OF WORSHIP - SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 1988



WORSHIP encompasses several elements of our relationship to God. We can imagine some of the wide varieties of the United Methodist worship experience. The mind's eye turns to an urban prayer-meeting where an Anglican priest's heart is strangely warmed by the promises of God's word; to a dirt-floored log hut in the brooding forest where a circuit-rider serves the Lord's Supper to a one-family congregation; to a brush arbor where farmers and their wives and children kneel at the mourner's bench during a late-summer protracted meeting; to a small brick church on a city lot where a woman rises from a small crowd of worshippers to lead in prayer; to a pastor's study where two people struggle to find light through earnest prayer; to a ramshackle frame building where a Black preacher's sermon is encouraged not only from the "amen-corner" but by cries from all over the church.

We see visions of a neat Victorian home where parents and children gather at day's end to read scriptures and pray before the family altar; of a twilight hillside where young people respond to God's claim on their lives at the close of a week at camp; of a wedding, a funeral, a baptism, a building dedication; and of a glassy suburban sanctuary where well-dressed worshippers stand to renew their faith through the Creed. The voices of United Methodist worship are as varied as our several experiences and as dynamic as the Spirit. The 1988 Heritage Sunday observance will give souls the chance to remember their own best moments.

CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE OF PREACHING - SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 1989



PREACHING was always the focal point for people from the Wesleyan tradition. The stories abound in our annals of dynamic sermons preached in strange places to unlikely persons with surprising results. Preaching, the feeding of the flock with the interpreted Word of God, provided the nourishment by which the societies which became United Methodism increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. John Wesley himself, perhaps more than anyone else, was profoundly influenced by the spectacular results of his field preaching. The early Methodist movement centered around his lay preachers spreading the gospel to the corners of Britain. Methodism's earliest standard of doctrine derived from a book of sermons rather than from a creed.

In America, it was preeminently through preaching that the Methodists reaped the harvest of the camp meetings. Through preaching, Martin Boehm convinced Philip William Otterbein that "we are Brethren." Through preaching, Francis Asbury and his companions called a continent to scriptural holiness. Through preaching, Methodists learned the basic tenets of the Christian faith in a time when few could read and there were no Sunday schools. Through preaching, lives have been changed and souls reborn. It is small wonder that we speak of God's claim on young men and women as "the call to preach." It is small wonder that United Methodist clergy were termed "preachers" rather than "pastors", "ministers" or "priests". Heritage Sunday 1989 will be a time to recall that legacy.

+++

CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE OF WITNESSING - SUNDAY, APRIL 29, 1990



WITNESSING is that particular aspect of the United Methodist tradition that demonstrates the true priesthood of all believers. Though the laity were for many years subordinated to the preachers in church polity, they were second to no one in proclaiming the gospel through private witness and public exhortation. The church even established the office of "exhorter" for precisely that reason. While the preached word has been the instrument of change for many lives, God has also used the encouragement of a laywoman or the testimony of a layman to touch the heart of a doubting sinner.

Sometimes laypeople have instigated great events through their witness. Phoebe Palmer's Tuesday women's meetings helped begin the holiness movement. John Stewart virtually created the Methodist missions organization by beginning work among the Wyandot Indians on his own in 1819. John R. Mott became a major force in the 20th century ecumenical movement. Harry Denman was one of the great evangelists of our time, bearing fruitful witness in public and in private. These and countless others have given testimony to their faith through word and work. In 1990, the church will celebrate the fact that lay people as well as preachers have answered God's call to bear witness to divine love.

Articles in THE INTERPRETER, official program journal for United Methodist leaders, and other vehicles of communication will remind us over the next few years of the Heritage Sunday themes celebrating the spiritual traditions of United Methodists. Many practical suggestions for the observance of these annual events will be forthcoming. This brochure serves simply to announce the themes so that pastors and lay leaders may begin now to plan to lead their congregations in these observances.

Congregations are encouraged to create their own new ways of CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE. These themes are the opportunity for individualized planning by each church. It is not too soon to set up a planning group. It can begin thinking about imaginative programs that will stimulate study and celebration centering on Heritage Sunday. We are beneficiaries of a dynamic spiritual tradition. It is our prayer that this examination of the past may open new channels for spiritual growth in our own time.

+ + + + + + + + + + + + +

Copy for this brochure was prepared by Dr. Robert Sledge, McMurry College, Abilene, TX. Dr. Sledge is chairman of the History Committee of the General Commission on Archives and History.

Annual Conferences or local churches have permission to reprint this folder for distribution and use.

The General Commission will appreciate receiving copies of programs, scripts, photographs and other materials from your Heritage Sunday celebration to share with others in the future. Please send them to the address below.

For addition help with planning Heritage Sunday or other historical events, please write to the Commission. We welcome your suggestions for future themes and creative ways to celebrate Heritage Sunday.

November, 1986



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
GENERAL COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY  
P. O. Box 127, Madison, NJ 07940

REGISTRATION FOR ANNUAL MEETING - May 2, 1987, 12:30 p.m.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Church**

### Number in Party

Please enclose \$5.00 per person for luncheon reservations and return to:

**THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
MONTROSE AVENUE AT HILL STREET  
VERONA, NEW JERSEY-07044**

Our luncheon will be prepared under the direction of Ms. Mary Miller, head cook at the Salvation Army National Headquarters in Verona. Deadline for reservations is April 20.

## The Historical and Archival Society

## The Northern New Jersey Annual Conference

**Annual Membership Dues \$10.00**

**Life Membership \$100.00**

Please make checks payable to the:

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY ... NO. N. J. CONFERENCE

**PLEASE  
SEND  
THIS  
FORM  
WITH  
YOUR  
DUES**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Clergy**  **Laity**  **Local Church**

**Church** \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: The Rev. George Watt, Box 546, Madison, N. J. 07941

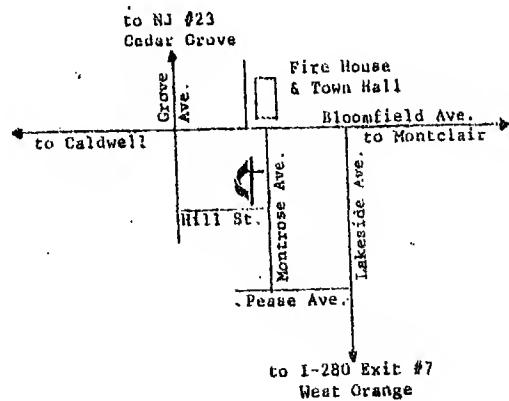
DIRECTIONS TO VERONA:

From I-280:

Take Garden State Parkway, New Jersey Turnpike, or I-80 to I-280.  
Take I-280 to Exit #7, "Pleasant Valley Way."  
On exit ramp, follow signs and bear right toward "Verona."  
Pleasant Valley Way becomes Lakeside Avenue. Follow the map or  
church signs to the church. The parking lot is on Hill Street.

From N.J. 23:

Take N.J. 23 South from Wayne  
(I-80 West, U.S. 46)  
Go under railroad overpass.  
Turn right immediately onto  
Grove Avenue.  
Follow Grove Ave. to the third  
traffic light (Bloomfield Ave.)  
Go straight across Bloomfield Ave.  
onto South Prospect Street.  
Go one block.  
Turn left onto Hill Street to the  
second church on the left.



CONSIDER A "LIFE MEMBERSHIP" IN THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY!

Life Memberships in the N.N.J Historical and Archival Society provide our Annual Conference with a permanent fund to insure the ongoing work of preserving and celebrating our United Methodist heritage. Life membership donations are invested with our conference Board of Trustees to provide a source of ongoing funding for the Society.

Why not ask your congregation to consider donating a life membership for that special parishioner with a love of Methodism's history in Northern New Jersey. Life members receive copies of the "Circuit Writer" and our annual publications. In addition, a special life membership certificate will be presented at our Annual Meeting in May.

REMEMBER:

This year's Special Offering for the United Methodist Archives Center in Madison, New Jersey, is Sunday, June 21st (FATHER'S DAY). This offering has been authorized by our Annual Conference to help defray the costs of building this new center. Special offering envelopes are available at the Conference Central Office in Madison (377-3800) or at sessions of the Annual Conference, May 29 - June 1. Please encourage your congregation to participate.